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From the author

6/31

THE  
ORIGIN AND DESCRIPTION  
OF  
~~BOGNOR,~~  
OR  
HOTHAMTON.

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THE

ORIGIN AND DESCRIPTION

OF

BOGNOR,

OR

HOTHAMTON;

AND AN ACCOUNT OF

SOME ADJACENT VILLAGES.

*(With a View of the former Place.)*

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BY

J. B. DAVIS, M. D.

Author of "Observations sur les Asphyxiés," "Projet  
de Règlement concernant les Décès," "The Ancient  
and Modern History of Nice," Member of several  
Medical Societies, &c. &c.

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"And thou, a spot  
Not quickly found, if negligently sought."—COWPER.

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TO THE  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN  
RESIDING AT  
B O G N O R.

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

AS no general account has been given of this agreeable Watering-place, I have yielded to the temptation of presenting the public with a description of it.

Permit me to remark, at the time that I consign the following pages to your auspices, that although my efforts to establish the merits of Bognor can bear no proportion to your

urbanity and kindness to me, yet I flatter myself that you will, at least, consider this attempt as a testimony of my zeal and respect.

If your pleasure should be promoted in the perusal, to the extent of the satisfaction that I derive from knowing that you honor and countenance my undertaking, I shall have attained my foremost wish. In these sentiments I have the honor to subscribe myself,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your most obedient,

and most humble servant,

J. B. DAVIS.

# EXPLANATION

OF THE

## PLATE.

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THIS view of Bognor is taken from one of the Bathing machines. It represents the Hotel, and a smaller building, that comprises the Subscription room, the Milliner's shop, the Library, and the Warm baths. The Isle of Wight, and the extremity of the Peninsula of Selsea, called Selsea Bill, are seen in the back ground :

beneath the Hotel are the wall, its wooden appendage, and an extensive tract of beach, shewing the line that the coast forms on this spot.

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ERRATUM.

Page 31, line 7. For *easily* read *early*.

# DESCRIPTION

OF

BOGNOR, OR HOTHAMTON.

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THIS rural watering-place, is situated on that part of the coast of Sussex which lies between Worthing and Selsea Bill. It is seventy miles distant from London, twenty from Worthing, seven from Chichester, and twenty-six from Portsmouth. No spot on the coast of England is perhaps better calculated for the two-fold purpose of sea-bathing and retirement than Bognor. Erected on the

borders of a firm and sandy beach that extends for several miles from east to west, and commanding a wide expanse of sea, it is in every respect convenient, and desirable for those, who, in pursuit of pleasure, or of health, seek the renovating influence of maritime abodes.\*

\* I shall here insert the account that has been given of this watering-place by Mr. Carey :

“ Bognor is another new established watering-place, twenty-two miles west of Little Hampton, by the way of Arundel, and Chichester ; it lies seven miles south of the last-mentioned, and seventy from London, through Guildford, Godalmin and Midhurst.

“ Since the death of Sir Richard Hotham,†

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† Sir Richard Hotham, who died in 1799, was early in life a hatter in the Borough, and increased his business by an extraordinary incident : instead of having

It must be obvious to every observer, that as there are no interven-

who was the first projector, and who carried his plan on with great spirit, and no less expence, the estate has fallen by different lots into various hands; many of whom have reason to congratulate themselves, on having closed in

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shop-bills as usual, he had his name and business inscribed upon pieces of copper, about the size of an halfpenny, which he issued all over the town, and sent to various parts of the kingdom.—This durable document attracted notice, and its whimsical originality induced many persons to employ him.—It was always a rule with him to have the best articles that could be procured; so that a new customer naturally became an old one.—After having followed the hat trade many years, and amassed a tolerable fortune, he ventured into the commercial world, and particularly into the property of shipping for the East India Company.—Being a man of strong judgment with a mind invariably directed towards business, he in time acquired very large property.—Sir Richard, though constantly attentive to the main chance, was capable of generous actions, and many young men

ing objects to check the free passage of the air to this shore, it is here met

with very advantageous bargains. Bognor began to be noticed by the public just before the founder died, who unfortunately did not live long enough to reap any advantage from this his favourite speculation. It is matter of regret that one of the new proprietors, who made a very considerable purchase at this place, should have shewn so evident a dislike to trees or foliage, as to have already cut down the only row of trees in this new and elegant village\*;

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have been patronized by him, and by his interest employed in the service of the East India Company, and indebted to his persevering attention and kindness for independence and distinction.—He opposed with success Mr. Thrale, at the election for the borough of Southwark in 1780, but retired from parliament in a few years. Sir Richard was knighted in consequence of presenting an address at St. James's, on the birth of a prince.

\* There were only three trees that were heyn.

with in a state of purity, a circumstance of the highest importance to

but we are told the gentleman was born on the other side the Tweed \*, and as many of that country have, ever since the reign of Bute the First, plodded themselves into the *first situations*, they have also contrived, by one maxim, or other, to make this country assimilate as much as possible to their own.

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \* “ The cutting down of trees by the natives of Caledonia, is not to be wondered at, as they have ever shewn a natural propensity for *levelling*, whenever they have had it in their power. Many of those who have visited Bognor, have been disappointed in respect to what they call *rocks*, especially when they have been the natives of the northern parts of England, Scotland, or Wales, who must have laughed at the ridiculous appellation given them by the inhabitants of Bognor and its neigh-

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\* No such thing.

those who are obliged rather to depend upon the sea breezes for resto-

bourhood, of rocks which are no more than common shingles, not higher than a hay-cock, such as are commonly seen on every part of the coast which surrounds the whole island, and are overwhelmed every tide, ducking their heads, as it were, under the waves, very often to the total overthrow of some goodly vessel and her gallant crew, when driven on them by an unpropitious and boisterous gale.

“ Bognor is an extensive village of brick-built villas, newly erected, but little inhabited. It is a desirable spot, and like a well-compiled newspaper, in lack of customers, is only wanting to be read; so Bognor is only wanting to be seen; there is a good hotel and small assembly-room near the ocean, which presents itself to you with the same kind of aspect as when you are at Brighton. It appears at present merely calculated for the superior sort of society, and as there is often a peculiar shyness in them from pride, in respect to rank and etiquette,

ration to health, than upon immersion in the briny fluid. Nor is this

they seldom associate, or are seen together ; the want of which makes it appear desolate, and throws a melancholy shade over the whole neighbourhood. Were there a few humbler habitations built for the middling race of his majesty's subjects, it might be a consideration worth attending to. It would add life to the scene by furnishing it with moving objects ; whereas, those which are there at present, whether it be from pride, or that they are ashamed at being looked at, sit brooding in their chambers the whole day, or if they venture abroad, they huddle and curtain themselves up invisibly in their carriages. The amusements of Bognor are few in number and little varied, but, if health is the object of pursuit, she may be found here as readily as in places of greater concourse. The rides and walks in the immediate vicinity present nothing very remarkable ; but every stranger should repeatedly see Chichester, one of the most desirable little

convenience, great as it may be, the only one. To the advantage of having a large tract of sand, very firm and compact, exposed at low water for pedestrian exercise, or recreation on horseback, or in a carriage, an agreeable descent of the coast may justly be added; inasmuch as it affords vast facility and comfort to those who bathe, and moreover inspires the timid with confidence and courage, when they commit themselves to the arms of Neptune.

The smoothness of the sand reminds

cities in England, for the constant resident or occasional visitor."

Surely the writer of this account, when he adverts to the scantiness of foliage, must have been misinformed; for the village every where abounds in trees, single and in clusters.

the valetudinarian of a velvet carpet, and invitingly draws him to the sea side, while the straight line of the coast, and its gentle slope into the Channel, enable him to enjoy his ride or walk, even at the reflux of the tide, without the least risk of surprise, or unexpected interruption from the waves. It is no wonder, therefore, that this coast has such general attraction for the bather, especially since stormy weather seldom or ever proves an obstacle to his pursuit. The knowledge of this fact has, no doubt, kept a number of families here to a protracted period of the season.

The part of the shore commonly resorted to for dipping lies eastward of the Hotel, being a mile or more in length ; but there is no fair reason

why it should be confined to this spot, since the Sussex coast is here for a considerable extent, either way, equally well adapted to the purpose of bathing. There is indeed a place below the rocks that I have heard mentioned as being very favourable for this kind of aquatic gratification, but there are no machines on this spot to facilitate the bather's views.

No particular place has been allotted at Bognor to female bathers. Men and women indiscriminately resort to the eastern side of the Hotel. There the god of the seas receives all with open arms into his briny domain; but not being at all times equally affectionate, complaints are occasionally made at the roughness of his embraces.

Immersion here, it must be confessed, is delightful, and especially when the tranquillity of the water permits the bather to enjoy the luxury and the softness of the sands.

Some of my countrymen, I perceive, walk along the beach towards Aldwick; and there, like true heroes, commit themselves to the waves, though no machine offers them a place of refuge after having bathed. Those who cannot swim feel no hesitation in adopting a similar plan, and console themselves in the act, by knowing that the shallowness of the water enables them to proceed to a considerable distance without incurring the slightest danger.

From the instant that the tide

begins to ebb, a number of persons, of all ages and descriptions, make their appearance upon the beach, in order to avail themselves of the prospect of a receding sea, and invigorate their constitutions by the inhalation of a salubrious atmosphere.\*

Bognor owes its origin, rise, and progress, to Sir Richard Hotham. The first work of the worthy knight was a range of houses, to which he gave the name of Hothamton-place.

\* Indeed this shore is deservedly the admiration of every one, not only on account of the smoothness of the beach and sands, but because of their excessive cleanliness. Perhaps this is the only spot exempt from those drains, that so generally disfigure and pollute other bathing places.

They are well situated, and command an extensive sea and land view. He next built, parallel with them, another range of houses, to which he gave the appellation of East-row. They are both composed of handsome red brick edifices, three stories high, before which are two small squares; one, by far the best, having a pump in its centre, and both of them a carriage-way, that communicates, at each end, with the high road leading to the Hotel. Between these buildings and the sea a large field intervenes, but there are no objects of any kind to obstruct the view of the marine landscape in front.

The Hotel is built upon the beach; and notwithstanding the precautions which have been taken, it is fre-

quently accosted with the spray of a boisterous sea. It is a large, well built house; very commodious within, clean, and exceedingly well regulated. Its front faces the Channel.

During the bathing-season the Hotel is so crowded with company, that it is difficult to obtain any apartments in it. The large garden that is annexed, and that extends along the coast, is a very agreeable appendage, and affords no little pleasure to the visitor. Surely the luxuriant appearance and growth of all sorts of vegetables, afford a proof of the salubrity and mildness of the air.

The Subscription-room is in a building erected still nearer to the sea than the Hotel. It stands to the right of the

latter, and commands a fine prospect of the sea, the villages of Aldwick, and Pagham, the harbour of the latter, the adjacent country, as far as Selsea Bill, and the summits of the rocks of the Isle of Wight. From the eastern windows may be seen Felpham, Berstead, the Sussex Downs, and the intervening country. This room is remarkably well situated, combining more points of view, with the exception of the Dome House, than any other building in the village.

The terms of subscription are ten shillings and sixpence for the season, and the proprietor engages to furnish two daily papers, court calendars, army and navy lists, directories, and magazines. There are commonly two or three dances here during the season.

The Library is underneath the Subscription-room, but it is very small, and contains but few books. Novels are its principal treasures: I do remember to have seen a history of Chichester; but nothing short of purchasing it, although you were a subscriber to the library, would entitle you to peruse this book. There is indeed no resource at Bognor for intellectual recreations. You must take books with you, or make up your mind to forego the pleasures of reading. Due encouragement, however, would certainly induce the librarian to supply visitors with better and more valuable works. I doubt not but there are many excellent private libraries, but these cannot always be resorted to; and it would certainly

prove inconvenient to many to send to Chichester for every useful and entertaining work that might be required. Adjoining the Library is a milliner's shop.

Westward of the Hotel there are three good houses, called Rock-buildings, and some cottages, one of which is very pretty, and known by the name of Allen's Cottage; all these command a fine view of the sea, and of the country around. Ascending the high road you pass several neat houses on the left: then Bognor Lodge; a large dwelling,\* termed the Chapel House; and further on still, but on the right hand, is the Crescent: Spencer's Terrace, which

\* The property of sir Thomas Trowbridge.

follows, a dwelling on the opposite side, and a few cottages at the entrance of the village.

All these habitations are situated on the side of the road : those of the Crescent are most remote from it, and screened from the public eye by a thick-set hedge, shrubberies, and clusters of trees at the bottom of the garden. Bognor is, at least, a mile in length, owing to the houses being detached, and to the distance that intervenes between one row of houses and another ; but this separation, far from being exceptionable, gives even additional charms to retirement.

The most inattentive observer cannot but be struck with delight at the princely habitations of the Crescent. The superb and capacious

apartments in the centre of the building, in particular, the noble space in the vestibule, and the handsome dome that crowns this edifice, fit it in a high degree for a place of public resort, and, of course, it needs hardly be added, make it an abode of peculiar magnificence for a private family.\*

Independent of the size and convenience of the apartments, which are elegantly furnished, the sea and land prospects from them are so beautiful and extensive, that this mansion unquestionably claims a pre-emi-

\* Sir Richard Hotham built this mansion for the express purpose of accommodating our gracious sovereign ; but having failed in that, his favourite object, it was afterwards converted into a private residence.

nence over every other dwelling in the district. From the Dome the Isle of Wight is seen majestically rising from the ocean. Thence the eye ranges over a vast extent of country, taking into one point of view, a part of Hampshire, Chichester cathedral, the beautiful grounds of lord Selsea, the duke of Richmond's seat, Slin-don house, the earl of Neuburgh's, the charming country around the duke of Norfolk's venerable castle, and many villas that art and nature have conspired to ornament with an interesting scenery. To this prospect may be added the distant hills and Beachy Head,

“ Downs that almost escape th' enquiring eye,  
That melt and fade into the distant sky,”

and that likewise gradually sink into

the sea, there forming a delightful finish to this panorama. The eye of the beholder is really enchanted, as it brings within its focus a reunion of the sea and land prospects that are commanded from the dome. This building being more elevated than any other at Bognor, the course taken by large ships, coming up or going down the Channel, is distinctly discovered hence : so that the pleasures of a moving scene are combined with those resulting from the fixed scenery of a plain of very considerable circumference, being not less than forty-five miles across. The high state of perfection at which the cultivation of the country is arrived, justly becomes another, and not less interesting, subject of admiration. The spectator will, more-

over, be delighted with the various tints and colours, which, from the deepest green to the brightest yellow, decorate and diversify the near and the distant fields. And when his eye becomes fatigued with contemplating the nobler objects of architecture spread over the plain, it will rejoice to repose awhile, and view at easy leisure the humbler habitation of the peasant, the well stored farm-yard, and the spire of the village church,

“ Pastoral images, and still retreats,  
Umbrageous walks, and solitary seats.”

Neither are the houses next the Dome House deficient in beauty or in elegance. Their advantageous situation, the finished style in which they are fitted up, a judicious distribution of ornaments and furniture within, give

them peculiar charms, and must impress every beholder with a high opinion of the taste of their inhabitants.

Besides these objects, the gardens also afford the highest satisfaction and amusement : taste, elegance, neatness, and an ample display of the beauties of Flora, combine to revive the spirits, and to please the eye.

The houses in Spencer Terrace, though inferior to these I have just described, are nevertheless excellent dwellings, and situated at an agreeable distance from the sea. The opposite cottages are by far the worst buildings in Bognor. The Chapel is contiguous to a house that I have already mentioned as the property of sir Thomas Trowbridge. It is commodious within, and very neatly dis-

tributed, having also a boarded floor. This chapel was built at the sole expence of sir Richard Hotham, and is licensed by the archbishop of Canterbury, the vicarage of Berstead being in the nomination of his grace.

Bognor may comprise in all fifty houses of different descriptions, but the greater part of them are occupied by resident families, so that visitors now find more difficulty than heretofore in accommodating themselves with apartments. I should not here omit noticing that from the light and porous nature of the soil in the immediate vicinity of this village, the heaviest rains soon sink into the earth, and leave its surface dry, when it would be unpleasant, if not imprudent. to walk or ride in the country

around. This circumstance I deem no inconsiderable advantage for the valetudinarian: it may, indeed, be regarded as a great recommendation, since the exercise and recreations of the man of pleasure or the invalid, may be pursued here, when in other places less congenial to health they might be restrained, if not wholly impeded.

The warm Sea-bath adjoins the Library. It is proportioned to the size of the village, that is, not very large, containing only two baths. The reservoir for receiving the salt water is erected above the bathing-room, whence pipes communicate with the copper. The water is pumped into the receiver when requisite, and renewed at least once a day. The

terms for bathing are 3s. 6d. ; and as the company are not sufficiently numerous to induce the proprietor to keep hot water continually in readiness, notice should be given that it may be prepared against the time required.

I feel it a duty incumbent on me to suggest, that cleanliness ought to be made a principal study by the proprietor of every bath as at Bognor, being a circumstance highly requisite for the comforts of the bather, and no small inducement to him to repeat his visits frequently, whether to promote the cause of health or pleasure. The necessity of a strict attention to this subject cannot be too strongly enforced in every establishment, but more especially where the bath is constructed of wood, which,

of all substances, the most readily imbibes noxious and offensive particles.

As every thing is upon a small scale at Bognor, a stranger must not suppose that he will find bathing rooms for his reception and accommodation. But although there is no convenience of this kind, he may, while waiting his turn to dip, spend a few minutes in perusing the papers, in the Subscription-room, which is contiguous to the warm bath, or if he prefers it, in conversing with some person, who is with himself in anxious hope of enjoying a tepid immersion.

With regard to cold bathing, there is no stated time. The machines are ready at six o'clock in the morning,

and the conductor is in waiting till twelve or one. There are ten or twelve machines at Bognor, which are drawn to any depth required: at low water the bather may go even as far out as the rocks. The ladies will find a female guide, but there is no awning to the machines as is customary on the Kentish, and some other coasts.

I deem it unnecessary here to expatiate upon the utility of bathing for the preservation or the restoration of health; the cleanliness, refreshment, or pleasure, procured from its use. These subjects have been already considered; and I shall, in consequence, content myself with observing, that a more general employment of baths would prove a powerful auxiliary to

the preservation of healthy excitement. The Romans found the highest gratification, and advantage from their use ; the French derive the same enjoyments from them to the present day ; but both these nations have carried to an excess a healthy and a beneficial practice. If we were to adopt the medium, we should probably be great gainers on the side of health. The infirm, the debilitated from fatigue, nay the irritable and sometimes feverish will experience a lively glow, a renovated existence ; sensations agreeable and animating will pervade the whole frame after using a tepid bath : but in this country, and under similar states of system, we scarcely know the effects of this useful auxiliary to health.

The sea on this part of the coast, does not seem to me to be very pungent. At a rude conjecture, I conceive, it may hold in solution  $\frac{1}{32}$  of its weight in salt. The water is not so turbid as it is at some other places ; where its muddy appearance, and confined range for bathing, favour the resemblance of a duck-pond, rather than a sea-bathing resort.

Rent upon the whole is reasonable at Bognor. One of the best houses in the Crescent, may be had from eight to ten guineas a week : smaller houses for five or six. Not any lodgings however can be procured for less than two guineas, or two guineas and a half per week, sometimes three ; nor must more than three small apartments be expected for this

sum. The inhabitants prefer letting their houses to families, rather than by separate rooms, so that the former may be generally well accommodated, where a single individual would fail in his application. Apartments, however, may be obtained easily in the season, especially if the parties will enter into an engagement to take them for three or four months.

The barracks are situated to the north of the village, but they are not capable of containing more than a small detachment of troops. They form a kind of frontier, where a few brave men assemble, in order, if necessary, to give the alarm to their brethren in arms, who would soon plant their standards round this little

outpost, should the enemy venture to appear before the coast.\*

\* Would it not be advisable at this time of public peril to make the military exercise of the horse a substitute for the pursuits of the turf? Plato, who, by the bye, was more of a philosopher than a horseman, insisted upon the military movements and exercise forming a part of the horse's education; and might not the sage Grecian's regulation be now imitated with advantage here?

As I was riding, not very easy, on horseback near the barracks when this thought struck me, I insensibly left Plato's company for that of Xenophon, who formerly said, that he taught his horse to go in all ways, to climb up a steep ascent, to leap over ditches, to cross streams, &c. I earnestly wished for Xenophon's presence, but could not help thinking that his horse must have been more docile than mine, or that he might, like me, have rejoiced to let

In the month of July a fair is held at Bognor, to the great annoyance of every one but the country people, who, of course, honor it with their presence. The scene of this confusion is before the Hotel ; and nothing can be more ridiculous and troublesome than the heroes of the ambulating stages. The gaping spectator, and the noisy buffoon, are equally objects of derision and disgust.

When a stranger arrives at Bognor he naturally enough looks out for the rocks ; but in order to save him unnecessary trouble and disappoint-

his horse go his own pace, rather than be served such a trick as mine, just at that moment, played me. There is no occasion for further explanation : the reader may easily judge what was my fate !!!

ment, I shall inform him that the few stony masses that are only visible here at low water, and that form a ridge from the western side of the Hotel, to a considerable distance on its eastern side, obliquely, scarcely merit the appellation of rocks.\* Such persons as have been accustomed to contemplate the rocky coast of Wales, and the huge masses of stone in Derbyshire, or the still more stupendous precipices of stone and rock in Switzerland, could not at least refrain from smiling at the application of such a term to a ridge of stones upon the coast of Sussex.

It was high water when I arrived

\* Further out still there is another similar ridge, which is always invisible.

at Bognor ; and far from discovering the least projection or eminence, I was struck with the regularity of the shore : there is not a single cliff, nor, until the tide ebbed, could I perceive the tops of what are termed the *rocks* of Bognor. All that can be said of these stones, and that indeed affords the highest satisfaction to the inhabitants, when they reflect on the possibility of a visit from their Gallic neighbours, is, that they might prove disastrous to unskilful pilots, and defeat an intended disembarkation of the enemy.\* However, something rather more formidable than these

\* The Channel is thirty-three leagues across from Bognor to Fécamp. The best securities for this part of the coast are its distance from the French shore, and its vicinity to Portsmouth.

barriers, I confess, is necessary to guarantee the safety of this coast: besides they in some measure obstruct the navigation of our own seamen. Perhaps there is no fact to verify the conjecture that the coast originally extended to this ridge of stones; but still the presumption is in favour of this opinion.

I shall now attempt to offer a short description of the prospects and country around this village. Let me however first observe, that the coast, to the east of Bognor, winds gently to the left, and then taking another turn advances into the sea, terminating at the point whereon is now situated the flourishing town of Worthing. After this the coast is again encroached upon by the sea, which in

its turn is again advanced upon by the territory around Brighton. Owing to the ingress of the sea between the point where Worthing rises to the view, and the hills of Brighton, the elevated country of the latter has literally the appearance of a shore entirely separated from the beholder at Bognor. The high land which we there discover at a distance, makes a finish to the landscape that is exceedingly interesting, and in no small degree resembles the coast of France on the side of the *ci-devant Picardie*.

If we look to the west, we shall there see a projection corresponding with the territory of Worthing. This is Selsea Bill, the extremity of a peninsula, which intercepts the view of

Portsmouth, and the greater part of the Isle of Wight. The sea has gained considerably upon this part of the Sussex shore ; and has formed a little bay, which terminates at the point of the peninsula.\* Although the contigu-

\* When the worship of the true God was embraced by the Saxons who inhabited this part of Sussex, the episcopal see was established at Selsea by the desire of Wilfrid. It appears from the history of Chichester that the see of Selsea was governed by the bishops of Winchester till the year 711 ; and that in the reign of the Conqueror the bishop's residence was transferred to Chichester. Stigandus is mentioned as the last bishop of the former place, and the first of the latter. A further interest arises from contemplating this spot, as it is presumed that the Danes and Norwegians, the year after having landed in Essex, whence to depart they received a bribe from Ethelred.

ous country is far from being picturesque, yet it presents an interesting,

disembarked on the southern coast, between Selsea and Pagham, from which places they penetrated into the adjacent country and to Chichester.

The enemy, successful in their depredations, lie here encamped for several months, though, but for the treachery of an individual in the English cabinet, who secretly advised them to depart, their fleet would have been blocked up, and themselves cut to pieces. The duke of Mercia, who held a joint command in the English navy, was the person that apprised them of their danger. They availed themselves of the hint, and effected a retreat with little or no loss.

Nor is Selsea less remarkable for being the spot where the first monastery was founded in Sussex, of which the charter was given by Adelwalch, king of Sussex, to Winfrid, and included in it the whole peninsula, and a part

and a pleasing, scenery. The vast expanse of the ocean before you, contrasted with the simple beauties of the adjacent land, and a tasteful display of rural architecture at Aldwick Green and Pagham, are objects that delight the eye. To these I must not forget to add the harbour of the latter place, the orna-

of the Manewode. This monastery was soon after endowed with lands, tenements, and other property in various parts, viz. Highly, Earnly, Lidsey, Aldingbourn, Eastergate, Mundham, and Sidlesham. It was dedicated to St. Peter, and was erected on the south-east side, and adjoining to the spot where the parish church now stands.

The peninsula is joined on the north-west side to the main land, by an isthmus of inconsiderable breadth. The church is of Gothic structure, and stately.—*History of Chichester.*

mented grounds of Lord Selsea, the near inclosure, and the distant forest; the intervening vale, and the remote and towering summits of the Isle of Wight.

The bay forms an angle, as if on purpose to place in greater security the little harbour of Pagham, which the extremity of the peninsula defends against the inroads of the ocean. The number of villas between the Hotel and Pagham harbour, (amongst the most agreeable of which must be reckoned the elegant little cottages of sir Thomas Peechell, Mr. Newnham, and Mr. Poyntz) impose upon the stranger, by inducing him to believe that this tract of coast is a continuation of the village of Bognor.

The plain on which Hothamton is

situated is open to the east, but is infinitely less exposed to the influence of winds coming from that point of the horizon than Worthing. It is bounded to the north by the Downs, a chain of mountains of an agreeable aspect, and varied cultivation.

*Sonnet to the South Downs.*

“ Ah, hills belov'd! where once, an happy  
child,

Your beechen shades, ‘your turf, your flowers  
among,’

I wove your blue-bells into garlands wild,

And woke your echoes with my artless song.

Ah, hills belov'd! your turf, your flowers remain;

But can they peace to this sad breast restore,  
For one poor moment soothe the sense of pain,

And teach the breaking heart to throb no  
more?

And you, Aruna!\* in the vale below,

As to the sea your limpid waves ye bear,

---

\* The river Arun.

Can ye one kind Lethean cup bestow,

To drink a long oblivion to my care ?

Ah, no !—when all, e'en hope's last ray is gone,  
There's no oblivion—but in death alone !”

Mrs. C. SMITH.

It has the Channel as a front and southern boundary, and on the west it is fanned by the breezes of the sea combined with the milder atmosphere of a cultivated soil.

Unless you approach the sea side, where the land is more elevated than elsewhere, the view around Bognor is much confined, on account of the level of the contiguous country. But to make amends, the whole plain is covered with corn fields, pasturage, inclosures neatly trimmed with hedges, and decorated with numerous

cottages, farm houses, and villas ; all of which open upon you successively, and unfold by *surprise* their several simple beauties.

“ Here snug inclosures in the shelter’d vale,  
Where frequent hedges intercept the eye,  
Delight us.”——

If in your excursions to the neighbouring hamlets you meet with no great diversity of scenery to attract the attention, nor those majestic objects which a more romantic country exhibits, yet you will be satisfied and pleased with the plain attirement of the fields, the skilful and elegant arrangement of the grounds, and hesitate not to draw a very favourable conclusion of the agricultural knowledge of the inhabitants. I would

not, however, have you suppose that there are no agreeable walks, or no inducements to seek recreation in the country : on the contrary, when the beach, and the monotonous sound of the waves, become tiresome, rural pleasures invite you into the adjacent villages, and promise ample amusement to the mind unwarped by dissipation. It is no small enjoyment to witness the welcome scenes of harvest, or the riches that nature pours upon the humble tenant of the plain : where

“ The sight is pleas'd,  
The scent regal'd, each odorif'rous leaf,  
Each opening blossom, freely breathes abroad  
Its gratitude, and thanks him with its sweets.”

As the licentious and gay shun this spot, because those excesses and

allurements, so inimical to the morals and the health of those who partake of them, are unknown, or at least excluded, there is greater comfort, more rational entertainment and pleasure, for those individuals who really seek the enjoyments of retirement, and the benefits of sea-bathing. Returning convalescence, perfect tranquillity, interrupted only by the bellowing of the waves, and the first of pleasures, the sociable conversation of a select few, supply the place of the noisy and more brilliant allurements of the fashionable world in other resorts. If health therefore be the object of the visitor, the customs are compatible with it; and if retirement be congenial to his inclination, he may rest assured that he

will find it here. None but the votaries of pleasure, or the dissolute, would fear an abode like this : they indeed would fly to regions that waft breezes more congenial to their depraved tastes ; but the rational and wise might seek such an asylum remote from tumult and dissipation.

While, then, some watering-places are visited for the sake of their beautiful situation and scenery, and others for fashion, Bognor will be sought for its retirement and economy.

“ Some minds by nature are averse to noise,  
And hate the tumult half the world enjoys ;  
The lure of avarice, or the pompous prize  
That courts display before ambitious eyes :  
The fruits that hang on pleasure’s flow’ry stem,  
Whate’er enchants them are no snares to them.”

I have been assured that many la-

dies have chosen to remain here during the winter, on account of the agreeable society: and doubtless many persons would be happier in the little social parties here, sequestered from the rest of the world, than in the more fashionable haunts of Brighton, Bath, and Ramsgate.

“ But now alike, gay widow, virgin, wife,  
 Ingenious to diversify dull life,  
 In coaches, caravans and hoys,  
 Fly to the coast for daily, nightly joys,  
 And all impatient of dry land, agree  
 With one consent to rush into the sea.”

I shall not, after the preceding reflections, lay myself open to contradiction by saying, that Bognor, as a watering place, promises retirement, a salubrious air, fine bathing, economy, and perhaps health to such as may chose to make it their summer

resort. As the rage for excursions to the coast of Sussex is confined to Brighton and Worthing, it is a doubt whether Bognor will rise more in the public estimation, though in addition to the encouragements above mentioned, the buildings, since the death of Sir Richard Hotham, have been judiciously divided into less expensive habitations for the purpose of accommodating small families. It may likewise be observed, that all those disgusting scenes which are a just cause of complaint in bathing places, where there are harbours for shipping, are never seen here; the rocks preventing the approach of vessels of burthen, and defeating such attempts as might otherwise be made to render Bognor a place of traffic.

Some persons of a rational description may possibly ask me to point out to them a watering place calculated for restoring their impaired constitutions, and for retrieving their reduced finances. To these I would reply, that they might here join regimen to the rigid rules of economy, without being thought vulgar or inconsistent by their fellow visitors : that there is no inducement whatever to be extravagant in dress, or to make inconvenient sacrifices for the purpose of keeping up an appearance of style, so ridiculous in those whose circumstances are humble and fluctuating.

As there are no places of public amusement, no one will be tempted to keep irregular hours. The parties that

are formed are sociable and select, so that the fault will be your own if you expose yourself, at an advanced period of the night, to the impression of a cold atmosphere. I would wish to caution those who do transgress a little, or who may be heated and fatigued by dancing, not to make the experiment of carrying off the languor occasioned by the preceding evening's exertion, by cold immersion on the following morning. I have seen many persons that were in health before, suffer in consequence of this indiscretion, and those that were already indisposed, become seriously ill.

It will also be proper to observe in this place, that if there is much difficulty in settling at Bognor, ac-

commodations are within the reach of common resources in the adjoining villages of Felpham, Berstead, Aldwick, and Pagham. An early application at the farm houses would ensure you cheap lodgings, and a choice of habitation; whereas when the season advances you must put up with what offers, no bill then advertising “*a house or apartments to be let.*”

As many parents are advocates for educating their children in small schools in preference to extensive seminaries, I doubt whether their views in this respect could be better accomplished than at Bognor. Again, the delicate frames of some children, especially those in whom there is a tendency to scrophula, would be sooner nerved and invigorated in a

maritime abode, than in an inland residence, however eligible it might be on account of the salubrity of its situation. The establishment of a seminary near the sea, for the exclusive reception of scrophulous children, appears to me to be one of those desiderata that have always been admitted, though generally treated with unmerited neglect. Due encouragement would doubtless induce many gentlemen to offer their services for the purpose of giving instruction.

It has been remarked that the air of Bognor is unhealthy, on account of the low lands which lie to the northward of it. To this objection I would beg leave to state, upon the authority of the inhabitants, and of

medical men, that disease is seldom seen amongst the persons who reside upon the sea shore. The children, to my own knowledge, have the aspect of health, are blooming and vigorous. It is true, intermittents not unfrequently manifest themselves in the adjacent yillages, nor is this surprising, the country being much lower than on the borders of the Channel, and of course more humid. A defective oxygenation will necessarily be the result of a residence here, as in all other low countries. The putrefaction of animal and vegetable matter, generates a profusion of deleterious air, and this process is always operating in a high degree in a marshy soil. But how different to such a country is the immediate

neighbourhood of Bognor ! Here, a gentle elevation, puts the inhabitant above the impression of such an atmosphere, and leaves him exposed to the influence of the sea breezes only. Some persons pretend that snow falls in less quantity around this spot, than on any other of a similar extent in England.

I have been assured by several ladies who have resorted hither for the purpose of regaining their health, that they have not been disappointed : the salubrity of the air, exercise, and bathing, having effectually removed a long train of nervous disorders with which they had been for many years grievously afflicted.

An easterly wind, dreaded so much in general by invalids, is not felt here

with equal violence as upon that part of the coast which projects into the sea; and this, in my opinion, is an important object. I would recommend such as are desirous of breathing a lighter air to ascend the Downs. The journey, it is true, is rather long, and therefore, I do not lay much stress upon its being repeated. The scenery around is fine, and I think the visitor would not regret going thither at least once.

Bognor must, of course, from the chain of hills that stretches out behind it, be protected from the northerly winds: but I have not had experience sufficient to determine whether the thermometer is higher here than at Brighton, though I have been assured that it is at least two or three degrees higher than at London.

The air of Brighton, every one knows, has become proverbial for its salubrity, and for its beneficial effects in pulmonary complaints; but is there not a class of phthysical and other invalids who would find great relief from breathing in a less oxygenated air? And with respect to the heat that is spoken of at Bognor during the summer months, it is ever moderated by the freshness of an extensive tract of sea, and thus is rendered even mild and agreeable.

I shall here mention, that amongst the little amusements practicable at Bognor, sailing is certainly one that may be prosecuted with the highest satisfaction.

An excursion to the Oar Lights, which are stationed at about the distance of nine miles from the shore,

in a direct line from Hothampton Place, would be very agreeable. Some ships having been lost upon this coast, it was deemed necessary to keep a vessel at anchor with large lanterns hoisted aloft at night, and a red flag during the day, for the purpose of warning ships from approaching the rocks, of which I have already said there is a second ridge, extending obliquely from Selsea Bill to a divaricated point opposite Middleton church.

Another excursion not less pleasant, might be made to Selsea Bill, whence may be seen the fleet riding at Spithead, the shore and rocks of the Isle of Wight, and the harbours of Portsmouth and Southampton.

In a third, the visitor might go to a beach-bank, at Pagham harbour,

whither the residents of Bognor resort for the purpose of searching for plovers' eggs, which are there met with during the season in great abundance, as well as a number of young sea-fowl, and shells of various kinds. If he should be inclined to cross the harbour, he would then have a sight of Sidlesham mills, where a vast quantity of corn is ground for the consumption of the navy.\*

Excursions might also be made with great delight to Little Hampton and Worthing.

As I have mentioned the scenes and the pleasures to be enjoyed in sailing, it is incumbent upon me here to observe, that the visitor will be no less delighted in an excursion to Slindon

\* These are tide mills, and considered to be very correct, and just in their principle.

House, the seat of the Earl of Newburgh ; to Dale Park, the seat of Sir George Thomas ; to Good-wood, the elegant mansion of the Duke of Richmond ; and to the venerable castle of the Duke of Norfolk, at Arundel.\*

\* “Ten miles hence is the town of Arundel, the first mention of which that we meet in history is in the time of king Alfred, who gave it by his will to Anthelm, his brother’s son, in which will the castle is also mentioned ; and from which it is reasonable to infer that it was built during that reign, or a little before. At the Norman conquest it was given to Roger de Montgomery earl of Chichester and Arundel. Henry the I. gave it to Adeliza, his second queen, for her dower ; who, after the king’s death, marrying William d’Aubeny, the empress Maud created the same William earl of Arundel, “ in recompence for his good services.” Her son king Henry II. gave him the whole rape of Arundel, to hold of him and his heirs by military tenure. To the son of this William, whose name was William, Richard

The attractions of these illustrious  
and princely abodes will not fail of

the I. granted " Arundel castle, together with the whole honor of Arundel, and the third penny out of the pleas of Sussex, whereof he is earl." The male issue failing in the fifth earl of this family, one of the sisters, and heirs of Hugh, the last earl, married John Fitz-Allen, lord of Clun; these enjoyed the estate, castle and honor of Arundel for several generations. Henry, the eleventh and last earl, died at London the 25th of February, 1579, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, as appears from a monumental inscription in the church of Arundel, where he was buried. He was succeeded in the honor, &c. of Arundel, by Philip Howard, his grandson, by a daughter, and in this noble and very ancient family of Howard, Duke of Norfolk, it remains to this day. In the reign of Henry the VI. a dispute arose between John Fitz-Allen, and John Mowbray, duke of Norfolk, concerning the right of inheritance in this castle and manor, and being carried into parliament, a de-

affording a delight and satisfaction equal to the sanguine expectations of the most curious and inquisitive.\* The extensive prospects at

finitive judgment was given in favour of the former, and an act was passed by which Arundel is made a feodal title ; so that whoever is in possession of the castle must be styled earl, and has a right to the rank and honour thereof without creation, as may be seen in the parliament rolls of Henry VI. Arundel is a borough by prescription, and sends two members to parliament, who are chosen by the inhabitants at large."

\* About nine miles hence is Goodwood, the seat of the duke of Richmond. It is very agreeably situated in a spacious park.† Good-

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† "The Duke of Richmond has lately made a capital race course, on a hill adjoining the park—the races generally take place late in April, or early in May, and last two or three days."

Good-wood embrace the whole tract of plain beneath it, the projections and recesses of the coast even from Brighton to the harbours of Portsmouth and Southampton, the country northward of the Downs, and for a considerable space from east to west, including many objects of striking interest, that well deserve the visitor's notice, and will amply recompense him for his journey thither.

I purposely refrain from detailing

wood formerly belonged to the noble family of Percy, but was purchased by the present duke's grandfather. As the original dwelling was only a hunting-seat of its former possessors, it had not to boast of much celebrity; but his grace of Richmond is now enlarging it upon so magnificent a scale, that it must hereafter attract the attention and admiration of every traveller."

the architectural beauties of this superb mansion, or describing its space, conveniences, curiosities, and magnificence. To do it justice would require more attention than it is possible to bestow in one short visit.

The same reason prevents me from mentioning the numerous beauties that art and nature, educated and uneducated, exhibit to our view at Arundel castle and Slindon House.

I trust that neither the physician, the invalid, or the man of pleasure will think it uninteresting to learn that there are several excellent springs at Bognor. One far superior to the rest, and in high repute, on account of the purity and transparency of its waters, has its source behind the Meuse : there was formerly a well on this spot,

termed Bignor-Well, but of late years a pump has been erected for the convenience of the inhabitants.

I have been assured that there are chalybeate springs in this neighbourhood, but after a tedious and fruitless search, I was left to lament that neither I, nor my attendant could discover the least trace of a mineral source. Still, no acquisition could be of equal value to this tranquil watering-place, and although my efforts have hitherto proved unsuccessful, I shall be satisfied, if this communication should induce others to make a more diligent search. Their reward would be great, since the benefit of mankind would be their object.

The charts of the Sussex coast indicate, not far from Bignor,

“ the Park good anchorage,” where formerly stood the see of the Bishop of Chichester. Its banks next the sea, are said to present a copious growth of valuable botanical plants : and the shore about Bognor abundantly produces iron ore, containing an admixture of cobalt and sulphur.

The shell fish taken here are held in high estimation. The celebrated Chichester Lobster, and Prawns of the finest flavour, are caught upon this part of the Sussex coast, and frequently in such abundance as to supply the Brighton, and even the London markets.— Within this year a remarkably fine oyster-bed has been discovered, only a few miles from the shore ; so that if families choose to give proper en-

couragement there is no doubt of their obtaining fish in any quantity. Nor will they experience the least want of excellent beef, mutton, and veal: the pasturage, indeed, is so very fine, that butcher's meat is particularly sweet and good. Although there is no market, yet a plentiful supply of poultry, butter, fruit, and vegetables is continually kept up by women who regularly bring these articles to the houses, whether they receive directions to that effect or not.

It is to be regretted that the improvements at Begnor do not keep pace with those that distinguish many watering places. We shall consider whether the cause is to be assigned to a want of that spirit and activity

which characterises the builders and proprietors of land near similar resorts, or to obstacles that it is not in the power of speculative men to conquer. Whatever impediments might have been thrown in the way of the latter for two or three years subsequent to the death of sir Richard Hotham, I am told that they now are, and have been, removed for at least a twelvemonth. No arguments or offers could at one time induce the proprietors of land to sell or let out their territory upon building leases ; but now there are public notices of their wish to do either. It is to be presumed that the premiums are too high for the speculator, whose eagerness and activity have been damped by the proprietors

retaining their land too long, and circumstances, of various kinds, having combined to defeat their objects. It is a fact, that since the demise of the patron of Bognor not more than seven or eight houses have been built; and these, with the exception of three westward of the Hotel, and reared by a carpenter, are all small. In proportion as the wealthy inhabitants of this country purchased or hired the most desirable dwellings, so it would seem the necessity of erecting others for the accommodation of the visitors would have increased, especially as the yearly influx of strangers is an unequivocal assurance of the complete success that would crown the speculator's efforts. Similar prospects in many watering places

would have occasioned a host of builders to come forward, but here not even the common exertions are made to bring Bognor into higher estimation, or general notoriety.

Although many of the inhabitants would wish to encourage the builder, not any of them manifest a wish to engage with him in the enterprise; and yet the soil affords earth for bricks, Bognor rocks supply stones of large dimensions, the beach furnishes lime, and the country affords other materials at a cheap rate. How desirable and delightful would be a range of buildings upon the coast westward of the Hotel, and eastward to communicate with Hothamton Place! Land is now also for sale in the neighbourhood of the post office.

It may in truth be said of Bognor as of many other sea bathing places of a second or third class, that the capital advanced has been just enough to bring it into estimation and set forth its several advantages ; but this aggregate expenditure has not been adequate to raise it above mediocrity ; and yet it has excited a spirit of envy and rivalship among its neighbours, tending rather to their reputation and aggrandisement, and to its own detraction.

Worthing has, undoubtedly, gained an ascendancy over Bognor ; though only a few years back they were on an equal footing, and free from jealousy. During the extraordinary advancement of the former it was natural enough for the

latter to attempt to draw to herself a share of the public estimation: she partially succeeded, but it is necessary to extend the number of dwellings, and she then may rest assured of having an annual influx of visitors of the highest respectability, and of being able to vie with her contemporaries in splendor and renown.

It is right to observe, that it was the original proprietor, sir Richard Hotham's decided plan to form and keep Bognor as distinctly unlike such places as Brighton, Worthing, Ramsgate, &c. as possible; but it certainly would now be very desirable, especially since so many houses are occupied by constant residents, that more houses were built, as the influx of company every season, for many years

back, has been far greater than could be accommodated with lodgings.

As the whole of the Sussex coast presents lamentable instances of the encroachments of the sea, the spectator would act prudently in building at some distance from the devouring element. Several acres of the territorial property of the inhabitants of Bognor and the adjacent villages have, within a period of fifteen years, been entirely washed away. In the memory of some aged persons still living, agricultural pursuits were carried on to the extent of several acres both above and below the village, where now the sea not only regularly ebbs and flows, but is making still further incursions. There is no natural barrier to check the inroads

of the ocean; the landholders have therefore caused wooden piles to be driven into the beach, in order to keep the earth together; and opposite the Hotel a wall of a semicircular form, with the concavity toward the sea, has been erected as a protection to that edifice. This has hitherto proved an effectual barrier; but when the sea is high it dashes against it with great violence. The wall, however, being thick, and constructed of portions of the opposite rocks, defies all the fury of the billows. A wooden appendage attached to it serves to break the shock of heavy waves. I have been informed that the ravages of the sea have been less flagrant for the two or three last years; but whenever Neptune shall be more

surely than usual, he will probably renew his assaults, and endeavour still further to extend the dominion of his trident :

“ Till he that rides the whirlwind, checks the  
rein,  
Then all the world of waters sleeps again.”

The choice of a spot on the shore to construct walls or piers, requires considerable discernment, as the obstacle they would oppose to the inroads of the sea in one direction, would serve as a point of resistance whence the water would rebound, and rush with increased impetuosity in another, so as to commit equal, if not greater depredation, than before these walls were erected. However, in my opinion, the curve

that trees take in the vicinity of the sea would be a lesson to the architect, and guide him in the form and course that should be given to the intended barrier. After all, perhaps, a line of these walls would be requisite, in order effectually to guard the coast against the insults of the god of the seas.

# ORIGIN OF BOGNOR,

OR

## HOTHAMTON.

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As late as the year 1784, Bognor was known only as a resort for smugglers, at which time it consisted of a few huts for fishermen, and for persons of the lowest order. Where the Hotel now stands, there was formerly a hovel, to which was affixed the sign of the Fox, as much frequented by French smugglers as by those who, on our side of the water, were engaged in illicit traffic with our neighbours.

From a conviction of the salubrity

of the air, sir Richard Hotham, of Merton Place, Surrey, member of parliament for the borough of Southwark, selected Bognor for his residence. Captain Blanchard, commander of the York East Indiaman, so much approved of this spot as to accompany the worthy knight, and take up his abode with him.

Sir Richard returned to Bognor every succeeding year; and in 1787, being perfectly restored to health, determined to purchase a piece of ground, build himself a house, and there spend three months in the year, in order to benefit by sea bathing, and the mildness of the air.

He first bought an old farm-house in order to convert it into a hermit-

age; but the expence attending this enterprise far exceeded his expectation. At that time it was unknown that the country afforded soil for making bricks, or that the coast produced chalk that could be made into lime. Notwithstanding that Sir Richard met with several obstacles, it is right to observe, to his credit, that he changed an ancient shapeless building into a commodious dwelling, to which he gave the name of Bognor Lodge. Sir Richard's skill, united to the natural advantages of the situation, made it a very agreeable and eligible abode.

Previously to the knight's examination of the qualities of the soil, and his discovery of its fitness for

making bricks, the inhabitants of the hamlet had to seek at Lymington, in Hampshire, this article to repair their premises. And they had to send to the grey stone pits, the property of sir George Thomas, thirteen miles distant from Bognor, to procure lime.

There were indeed a few lime kilns in the neighbourhood, but they were very small, and constructed *à nécessité*, by the farmers, who burnt only just enough chalk to serve for most urgent repairs.

It appears on record, in the parish-register of South Berstead, that lime and bricks were first attempted here, and afterwards brought to perfection by Sir Richard. The knight boasted of the superiority of his

bricks over those of the duke of Richmond.

The first stone of Bognor Lodge was laid by Sir Richard on the 18th of January, 1787, at the moment the guns at Portsmouth were firing a salute in honour of Her Majesty's birth-day. The year following this building was finished.

More and more satisfied with Bognor, Sir Richard purchased other land, and built convenient dwellings, for the accommodation of those who might desire retirement and sea-bathing: and in a short time became sole proprietor of this territory, comprising not less than sixteen hundred acres.

The corner-stone of the chapel was laid by the Duke of St. Alban,

on the 12th of August, 1793, when the guns at Portsmouth were hailing the birth-day of the Prince of Wales, and Sir Richard placed under the same stone a sheet of lead with a record of its foundation.

The Duke was assisted upon this occasion by a numerous and brilliant assemblage of noble personages, gentlemen and ladies of the first respectability, a band of music preceding the open carriage in which his Grace and family were conducted from Hothampton Place to the spot.

When the ceremony was performed, the band played "God save the king;" after which the company proceeded to the marquees that were purposely placed in the garden of the Crescent for their reception.

Refreshments also of various kinds were prepared in abundance for the party.

At three o'clock the company assembled in the *grand saloon*, which was decorated with a print of the prince of Wales, plumes of feathers, mirrors, and branches of laurel interwoven with festoons of natural flowers. And here Sir Richard evidenced his hospitality and munificence by a display of a sumptuous collation, composed of every dainty the season afforded.

The whole concluded with a ball in the evening at the Hotel, attended by a select party of ladies and gentlemen ; for whose further entertainment Sir Richard had taken care to provide fire-

works, which were as advantageously seen from the windows, as they contributed to promote and give a pleasing finish to the pleasures of the night.

AN ACCOUNT  
OF SOME OF THE  
*ADJACENT VILLAGES.*

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SOUTH BERSTEAD

Is a village to the north of Bognor, at the distance of about a mile. Two ways conduct to it; one is a path-way that crosses the fields in a direct line from the Post Office; the other is the high road that passes by the Crescent, but no pedestrian would prefer the latter.

Berstead was a well known village, and in some degree of repute when Bognor was still in embryo; and prior to the birth of that place was reckoned among the principal villages of the district. The site of Berstead is, however, far inferior to that of Bognor; it lies considerably lower, and has not the advantage of commanding a sea view, or even a land prospect of the smallest interest. The interior of the village had, nevertheless, its little attractions for me, especially

“ When all the village train, from labour free,  
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree.”

Through Berstead passes the road to Petworth, on each side of which

are several neat farm-houses, extremely comfortable within, and sufficiently capacious to lodge small families, who may visit the coast during the summer months.

The church stands at the entrance of the village, on the right; and though it cannot lay claim to architectural beauty, yet it may at least boast of holding a foremost rank among village churches. It is but justice to mention, that it owes this distinction to the munificence of Sir Richard Hotham, who expended upwards of six hundred pounds in repairs and improvements, in erecting a commodious gallery for the convenience of casual visitors, a new pulpit, reading-pew, and other accom-

modations. The parsonage is a complete little hermitage, without a prospect beyond the wall and garden hedge by which it is bounded. It never could have had any pretensions to symmetry, whatever may now be its claim to antiquity. The garden and orchard, however, are tasteful and pleasant. This little retreat is wholly screened from the public eye, but opposite to the church the curious will find a gate and path conducting to it.

The visitor to this coast may perhaps be induced to walk to Berstead; and in this case, he may possibly find amusement for a few minutes in the churchyard, in perusing the specimens of village poetry on the tomb-stones.

The attempts of “the unletter’d Muse” at Berstead are not of the most brilliant order, but yet these “uncouth rhymes” inscribed beneath

—“angel heads in stone and pigeon wings”—

excite the wonder and admiration of the gaping rustic. When I recommend a visit to this spot, it is, of course, less for the purpose of instruction than of entertainment.

In this sanctuary are deposited the remains of Sir Richard Hotham; and on the door of the vault a very simple inscription in *prose*, to the no small mortification of the village bards, is dedicated to his memory.

Florian requested the swains of Occitania, whom he has celebrated

in his *Estelle*, to write the following lines upon his bower :

Dans cette demeure tranquille  
Repose notre bon ami :  
Il vecut toujours à la ville  
Mais son cœur fut toujours ici.

How justly might the same sentiments be applied to Sir Richard by the inhabitants of this sequestered spot in commemoration of his predilection for Bognor and its vicinity ! The turf-built shrine on which he so frequently reposed now covers his mortal remains. Come then, ye swains and maidens of the hamlet, tread with reverence on the consecrated spot, plant upon it your choicest flowers, and let them be the objects of your incessant care !

When Bognor is full of company, visitors often take up their quarters at Berstead. Few would, in my opinion, prefer it for their residence: lodgings are not cheaper there, and great inconvenience arises from the distance they are obliged to send to procure the necessities and little comforts of life.

## FELPHAM.

This village is situated at the eastern side of Bognor, and lies in a small bay, having one extremity terminated near Middleton Church, and the other at a corresponding projection at the western end of Felpham. Although the ride hence to Middleton by the sea-side is rather fatiguing, on account of the ruggedness of the shore, yet no visitor ought to deprive himself of the fine prospect he will enjoy there, for the sake of obviating a trifling inconvenience. On the right hand a wide expanse of sea opens to the view, embracing the

near course that ships are observed occasionally to pursue, when proceeding from the Downs to the chops of the Channel, or from the western to the northern shores of our island; on the left the eye rests on a lengthened series of corn fields and meadows, extending from the village to the sea-side, bedecking the latter with a gay verdant mantle, even to the water's edge. Behind those fields arise three or four excellent and commodious dwellings, shaded and embellished by clusters of trees; and what still enhances their merit, commanding a marine landscape in front, and an extensive land view in the rear, and at each extremity. Felpham being situated on an eminence, from no spot better than this,

perhaps, can the circumjacent country be surveyed. The tract of ground on the north-eastern side of the village is covered with meadows and corn fields, gardens, lawns, villas, and their various appendages, forming a varied and interesting *tout ensemble*. At the furthest extremity of this plain, the bases of those hills described in a preceding page, gradually become more conspicuous; they then fall back by an easy slope, opening to the view the country behind, and giving room for the eye to view with higher delight and satisfaction this enchanting scenery. These hills form besides a variegated border to the landscape, whose beauty is further heightened by the distant perspective of the elevated land.

that borders Worthing and Bright-helmstone.

From the surrounding scene the eye wanders to other remoter objects, which alternately meet the sight, and recede from it, varying and extending the prospect. New views unfold themselves to the left, in the direction of the hills; in the fore ground stand the handsome houses and gardens of the Crescent: continuing the *coup d'œil* in an horizontal semicircle, plains and hills successively pass in review, till the wandering eye, at length, reposes on the peninsula of Selsea Bill and the majestic summits of the Isle of Wight.

Felpham was frequented by persons who sought a maritime residence in summer, long before Bognor was

brought into notice; and those who may now choose to make it their abode, will find a sandy beach, well adapted for bathing, four or five machines, and several lodging-houses of various dimensions.

The best dwellings by far in this village are occupied by constant residents. Mr. Hayley the celebrated poet's house, and that of the Dean of Christ Church, stand foremost.

From a distance the aspect of Felpham is more agreeable than that of Berstead, yet the interior of the village does not, upon the whole, answer to the idea that the stranger would form of it *ab externo*: as a place of abode it is, however, preferable to Berstead, which cannot boast of superior internal attractions;

the dwellings, views, and situation of Felpham being far better. The only walk I know of in that neighbourhood is across the fields to Bognor, or along the sea-side. The church of Felpham is neither so large, nor in such good repair as that of Berstead, yet it is well situated, and has an agreeable effect in approaching the village.

There certainly must have been great improvements in the agriculture of this country within a few years, for trees formerly so scarce, are now numerous, and vegetation so scanty, is now luxuriant.

Few parts of our coast are better cultivated than this ; few perhaps can boast such rural riches.

## MIDDLETON CHURCH.

This edifice is worthy of notice for its singular situation on the borders of the Channel, and its ruinous condition. I cannot say that the architecture or general appearance of the building is entitled to admiration; but its present proximity to the sea, and its mouldering walls, exhibit a melancholy example of the devastation committed by the insatiable element on this part of the Sussex coast. About thirty years back, many acres

of cultivated land interposed between this church and the ocean, but now the billows extend their impetuosity to the very walls of this ancient fabric, which, at no very distant period, they will probably have levelled with the ground. If there is nothing venerable or romantic in the aspect of Middleton Church, it has, however, something dreary and dismal, especially when its ruinous walls are approached from the sea-side, where, the difficulty and danger of passing it, give additional gloom to the sentiments inspired by a distant contemplation.

Neptune is as good a geometrician as Time, witness the broken pillar at Middleton, and makes no bad resur-

rection-man, as this Golgotha, or place of skulls, evinces. I have related that the merciless deity has swallowed up fields and edifices ; I must now add, that not content with this havoc, and with continually making war against the living, he has invaded the habitations of the dead, which he has plundered of their peaceful tenants. He has effaced every vestige of many graves in this church-yard, has bleached the bones of their occupants, and scattered such as he pleased on the shore, in order to remind us of our frailty and his power. So much for the strange freaks of this sovereign of the sea ; let us now direct our attention to a more amiable object.

Middleton Church has obtained some celebrity from having furnished the scene of one of the poetical compositions of the late ingenious and unfortunate Mrs. Charlotte Smith. The reader will not perhaps be displeased if I conclude my observations on this relic, which will soon lose every vestige of existence, with the lines which the ruinous aspect of it inspired.

## SONNET.

Press'd by the moon, mute arbitress of tides,  
 While the loud equinox its pow'r combines,  
 The sea no more its swelling surge confines,  
 But o'er the shrinking land sublimely rides!  
 The wild blast, rising from the western cave,  
 Drives the huge billows from their heaving  
     bed;  
 Tears from the grassy tombs the village dead;  
 And breaks the silent sabbath of the grave!

With shells and sea-weed mingled on the shore,  
Lo ! their bones whiten in the frequent wave ;  
But vain to them the winds and waters rave ;  
They hear the warring elements no more :  
While I am doom'd, by life's long storm oppress'd,  
To gaze with envy on their gloomy rest !.

## ALDWICK GREEN.

The vicinity of this village to Bognor, and its pleasing situation on the sea shore, tempt some visitors to reside in it during the summer, in preference to any other spot in this district. It is only half an hour's ride from the Hotel either along the beach or by the road. The former way is however preferable, as it gives a view of the best dwellings of Aldwick Green, which mostly front the sea. The three pretty cottages situated on the rising bank close to the shore, are the property of Sir Thomas Pechell, Mr. Poyntz, and Mrs. Wharwood. They skirt the green with-

out hiding the verdant mantle spreading between to the water's edge, and are highly commendable both for the simplicity of their construction, and well-chosen situation. Indeed it would be difficult to meet with, or to conceive a more enviable solitude than Sir Thomas Pechell's.

On a delightful eminence, commanding a variegated and extensive prospect, and at whose foot the sea breaks with unavailing rage, you discover, hanging over the beach, a thatched cottage, more remarkable for its simplicity than for its architectural ornaments. The building is long and low; it would even have appeared heavy but for two attic windows in the middle of the roof, which give this rural cot a light and

picturesque aspect. The other windows are on a level with the ground, and are ornamented in front with columns, or rather pillars, of the viranda, clothed with jessamines, honey-suckles, and fragrant shrubs of a similar nature, whimsically interwoven, and affording a delightful shade, while the soft gale diffuses all around, the fragrance of their variegated flowers.

“ Some more aspiring, catch the neighbour  
shrub

With clasping tendrils, and invest his branch  
Else unadorn'd, with a many gay festoon  
And fragrant chaplets, recompensing well  
The strength they borrow with the grace they  
lend.”

COWPER.

The doors, on this side the rural retreat, open into a garden gaily attired in Flora's choicest hues; an enamelled

*parterre* thus forming an agreeable contrast with the adjoining field, and the deep green waves that bathe the contiguous shore.

This little habitation faces the south-east, and is graced on the northern side by trees, a garden, the green, and some neighbouring villas, uniting taste and beauty ; so retired is it, so screened from public view, by the distribution of the shrubberies, the trees, and the hedges, that nothing can disturb the recluse inhabitants, sweetly enjoying the charms of solitude and contemplation.

“ O ! friendly to the best pursuit of man,  
 Friendly to thought, to virtue and to peace,  
 Domestic life in rural pleasure pass'd !  
 Few know thy value, and few taste thy sweets,  
 Tho' many boast thy favours, and affect  
 To understand, and chuse thee for their own.

COWPER.

An abode like this is well calculated for the philosophic observer of nature. Here, sheltered from the rough blast of the world, amidst the smiling beauties of the surrounding scenery, what an inexhaustible source of pleasure would he derive from reflection? If a happy choice of time and place be necessary to foster genius, and bring its fruits to maturity, what spot more congenial than this could possibly be selected? And if, avoiding the subtle disquisitions of metaphysics, which exhaust and wither the soul, or politics, which madden the brains, he wisely prefers the charms of friendship and domestic felicity, where is there a place in which those finer feelings can be indulged with more perfect security,

and with less disturbance from exterior occurrences?

The newly built cottage of Mrs. Wharwood, although not clothed in the luxuriant mantle spread over that of Sir Thomas Pechell's, is, in the opinion of many persons of taste and discernment, not a less desirable habitation. Neither there, nor, as I am informed, at Alderman Newnham's, is the garden of Timon displayed, where

“ Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,  
And half the platform just reflects the other :”

but, on the contrary, Nature in those places, sports her beauties, improved, but not distorted by the helping hand of art ; the simple ornaments of rural architecture add grace and animation

to the landscape ; art and nature seem to have united, and to vie with each other in order to form an enchanting retreat.

In continuing your ride along the green, you pass several neat cottages on the left, and the barracks on the right : but the most remarkable object there, is a tree, which many years back was torn up by the roots, so that its trunk lay prostrate on the ground. In this situation, the large branches at their departure from the main trunk, have penetrated into the earth, and grown perpendicularly, so that from one side you have the usual aspect of the body of a tree, the branches having now literally become the trunk ; while from the other, the original trunk, of con-

siderable dimensions, projects out, horizontally, resembling that part of a decayed tree, leaning for support on the younger shoots.

Trees of a less extraordinary appearance, have been minutely described by travellers. What a pity for its fame that we do not live in the age of metamorphoses! An Ovid would, in smooth harmonious lines, have given us an account of this phenomenon. We should have been told, perhaps, that some nymph and her aged mother, had been hid under this bark by some friendly divinity, who, had no other means to rescue them from a petulant satyr, or a rough sea god. Now a days a *coup de vent* is the only wonder-working agent.

## ROSE GREEN.

From the simple scenery and profound retirement of this little spot, it is deservedly entitled to our attention. It consists of a few cottages and two or three farm houses, which, if not picturesque, are extremely neat and agreeably situated, being detached from each other by intervening gardens and corn-fields. There is, strictly speaking, only one avenue to Rose-Green, but an imperfect road has been made to it, in another direction. Were it not for the latter outlet, which, indeed, is almost imperceptible, the inhabitants might be

said to be completely secluded from the rest of the world, communicating with it only at one point. Seemingly shy and fearful of mankind, they appear to have selected this retreat, on account of its being accessible to the humble families alone, that were to compose its population. But, notwithstanding this rational determination, the powerful influence of gold has been able to make another avenue for the intruder; an assailable side not thought of by the rustic, when first he sought an asylum in Rose Green.

## PAGHAM

Is at least four miles distant from Bognor, and though not much frequented by company, its proximity to the sea, its harbour, and situation at the base of a peninsula, claim our notice, or, at least, amply repay the trouble of a visit. You may ride along the beach to Pagham, and while the view is bounded by the sea, on the one hand, you enjoy an agreeable prospect, on the other. This place affords no accommodation for bathing; but if those, who may be induced to spend a few weeks on this spot, possess sufficient strength and

courage, they may here commit themselves to the arms of Neptune, unperceived, and with no less safety and delight than at Bognor. The harbour, situated at the furthest extremity of the village, admits only vessels of small burthen.

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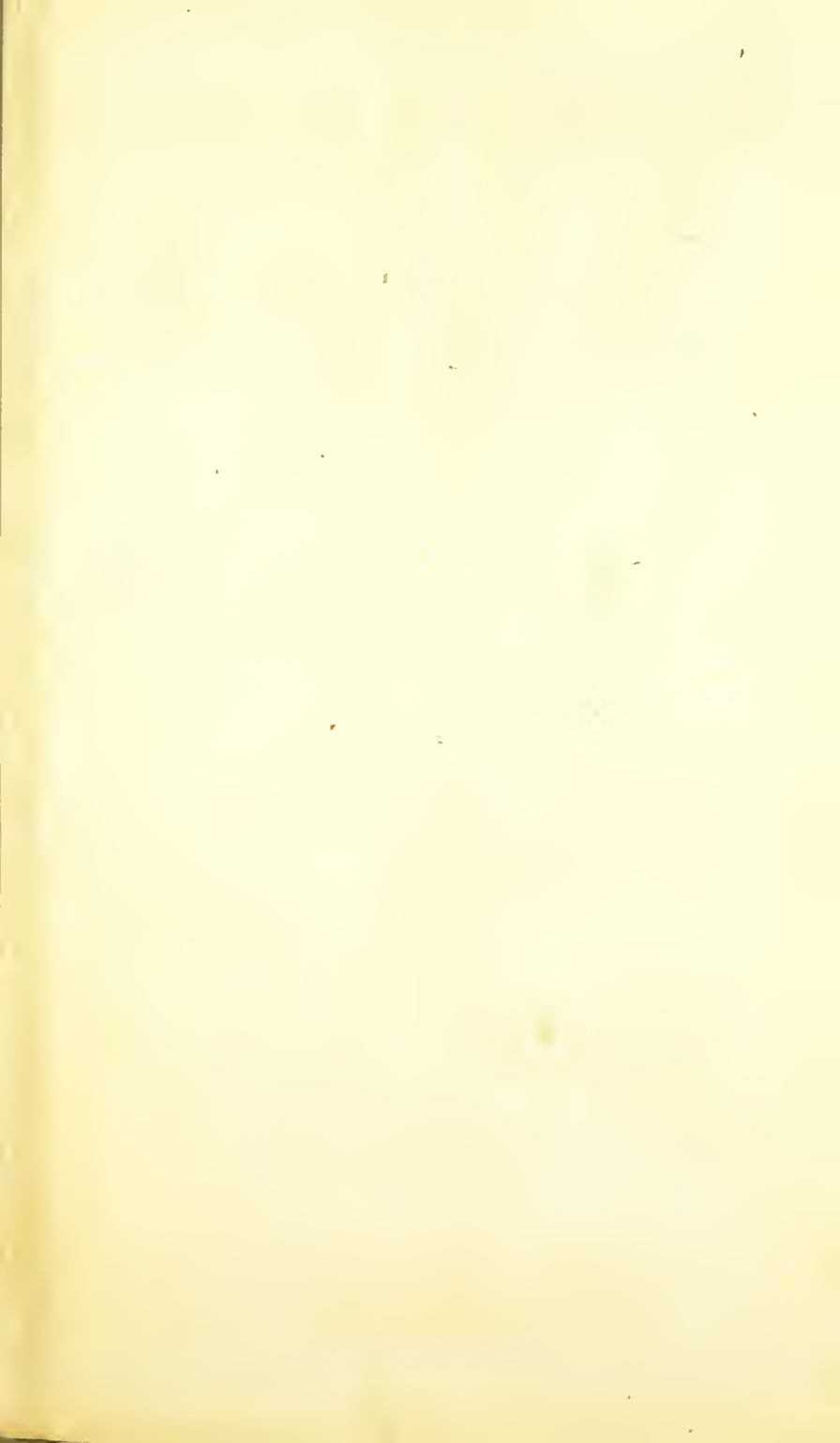
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